

SOSC 151-152-153

Classics of Social & Political Thought

WHAT CAN I EXPECT FROM THIS SEQUENCE?

By interpreting provocative and influential texts from the ancient world through the 20th century, Classics examines some of the most consequential concepts, ideas, and institutions of the past and our sense of how they might inform political dialogue and citizenship today. Topics considered include: justice and injustice; freedom, oppression, and slavery; shared humanity and human diversity; equality and inequality; human rights, democracy, and the rule of law; and political dissent, rebellion, and revolution.



WHO MIGHT BENEFIT FROM TAKING CLASSICS?

- Students interested in arriving at a deeper understanding of the meaning of politics and engaging multiple world views with different logics, assumptions, and organizing values
- Students who want to practice strong argumentation through close reading and attentive, rigorous writing

“One of the great strengths and main features of Classics is its historical arc. The Classics student must be interested in the history of thought in itself – in seeing how social and political thought has morphed over time, for reasons greater than merely arriving at the ‘right’ answer.”

- Josh Kindler '25

TEXTS COVERED



Autumn: Plato, Aristotle, Aquinas, Machiavelli

Winter: Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Wollstonecraft

Spring: Tocqueville, Marx, Nietzsche, Du Bois, Beauvoir

STUDENT TAKEAWAY

WHAT MAKES CLASSICS STAND OUT?

- Critical analysis of political and legal concepts
- Texts that investigate and challenge multiple forms of authority
- Texts influencing political debates from the ancient to the modern world